

# Waste Management

**G**ot waste? Lucky for you, Hood River County is one of the few counties in the state that has a sanitation company (Hood River Garbage, Inc.) that will provide service to your home regardless of your location. There are many other community services also available to manage your waste disposal needs. In this chapter we will provide a brief overview of some of these waste management options.

## Household Hazardous Waste

Leftover household products that contain corrosive, toxic, ignitable or reactive ingredients are considered to be household hazardous waste (HHW). These products include items like paints, cleaners, oils, batteries and pesticides that contain potentially hazardous ingredients and require special care when you dispose of them.

Improper disposal of HHW includes pouring them down the drain, on the ground, into storm sewers, or putting them out with the trash. The dangers of such disposal methods might not be immediately obvious, but improper disposal of these wastes can pollute the environment and pose a threat to human health



Instead, safely store your HHW until you are able to take it to one of the regular collection events in Hood River County. Watch the Hood River News, your SWCD website or call Hood River Garbage, Inc., for information about upcoming collection events.

## Yard Debris

On Wednesdays, you can bring yard debris to the Hood River transfer station (at 3440 Guignard Drive) for free. Before 2003, the waste went to landfills, but now the company grinds the material and takes it to the Portland/Vancouver market for compost.

## Burn Barrels

Many rural residents choose to burn their trash in a 55 gallon drum or in a pile. However, in Hood River

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County, there is really no reason to engage in this practice since full garbage service is provided to all county residents at a reasonable rate.

High levels of toxic chemicals and particulates are emitted in the smoke of burn barrels. These may cause acute respiratory and other health problems in those breathing the smoke.

## Recycling

In addition to garbage collection, Hood River Garbage Inc., provides curbside recycling service for all plastic containers, mixed paper, aluminum, tin cans, phone books, cardboard, glass, milk cartons and even used motor oil. These recyclables are shipped to a Materials Recovery Facility in Portland.

## Gorge Rebuild It Center

One of the best ways to handle waste is to reuse it. If you need to dispose of old building materials, bookshelves, fixtures or other leftovers from your latest remodel, consider making a charitable donation to the Gorge Rebuild-it Center. This non-profit retail store's product line consists of reusable building materials. Contributors receive a tax deduction for their donation. Kitchen and bathroom cabinets and fixtures, windows and doors, dimensional lumber, lighting, reusable flooring, surplus electrical and plumbing supplies, bricks, block, tile and any other reusable building materials are accepted.

*Article written in cooperation with  
Jacque Betts, Hood River Garbage, Inc.*

## Resources

EPA: Household Hazardous Waste Guide:  
[www.epa.gov/msw/hhw.htm](http://www.epa.gov/msw/hhw.htm)

Gorge Re-Build It Center: [www.rebuildit.org](http://www.rebuildit.org)

Columbia Gorge FreeCycle Network:  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/gorgefreecycle/>